

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO CINCEUR VAIHINGEN

USAREUR HEIDELBERG

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 109445

EXDIS HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO PARIS, NATO, MBFR
VIENNA, SALT TWO GENEVA, LONDON FROM BONN MAY 13:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 08264

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS INFO TO: SECDEF, USNMR SHAPE,
CINC EUR VAIHINGEN AND CINC USAREUR HEIDELBERG. MILITARY
ADDEES TREAT AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE.

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: FR, PGOV, MPOL, GW

SUBJECT: FRANCO-GERMAN DEFENSE TALKS

BEGIN SUMMARY: ROUTINE FRANCO-GERMAN CONSULTATIONS IN
THE FRG AT THE DEFENSE MINISTER AND CHIEF OF STAFF LEVELS
HAVE NOT RESULTED IN ANY NEW POLICY DEPARTURES
OR CONCRETE AGREEMENTS. RATHER, THE TALKS HAVE SERVED
THE PURPOSE OF SUSTAINING THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO
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COUNTRIES ON DEFENSE ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST. END
SUMMARY.

1. LEBER-BOURGES MEETING. THIS MEETING TOOK PLACE IN
HAMBURG ON MAY 7-8 AND REPRESENTED THE FOURTH TIME THAT
THE DEFENSE MINISTERS HAD MET. FMOD SOURCES CHARACTER-
IZED THE ATMOSPHERE AS EXCELLENT AND SAID LEBER WAS VERY

PLEASED WITH THE DISCUSSIONS. THE TALKS WERE HELD IN A PORT CITY SINCE BOURGES WANTED TO CONCENTRATE ON THE THREAT IN THE BALTIC POSED BY THE SOVIET FLEET. HE HAD ALSO PLANNED TO VISIT GERMAN FLEET UNITS, BUT THIS PART OF THE PROGRAM WAS SCRAPPED WHEN BOURGES DECIDED HE HAD TO RETURN TO PARIS.

2. THE GERMANS PRESENTED TWO BRIEFINGS, THE FIRST GIVEN BY ADMIRAL KLOSE, COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE GERMAN FLEET, THE SECOND BY MAJOR GENERAL BRANDT, DIRECTOR OF THE POLITICAL/MILITARY STAFF IN THE DEFENSE MINISTRY. IN THE GENERAL DISCUSSION WHICH FOLLOWED THE BRIEFINGS, A DEFENSE MINISTRY SOURCE SAID THAT BOURGES HAD EXPRESSED THE NEED FOR GREATER POLITICAL CONSULTATION WITHIN THE ALLIANCE AND ALSO MADE REFERENCE TO SOVIET "HEGEMONY POLITICS" AS DEMONSTRATED BY THEIR CONTINUING BUILDUP OF MILITARY FORCES.

3. IN THE FIELD OF STANDARDIZATION, THE MINISTERS DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITIES FOR COOPERATION IN DEVELOPING THE BATTLE TANK OF THE 90'S. DISCUSSION CENTERED AROUND WHETHER SUCH A TANK SHOULD BE "HARMONIZED" OR "STANDARDIZED." OUR GERMAN SOURCE INDICATED THAT THE FRENCH SEEMED TO BE CONVINCED THAT THE NEXT GENERATION OF AMX TANKS WOULD HAVE TO CARRY A 120MM RATHER THAN A 105MM GUN. THE GERMANS SEEMED TO BELIEVE THAT THE FRENCH WERE ALREADY FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD THE GERMAN 120MM GUN.

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4. WUST-MERY MEETING. THE PRINCIPAL ITEM BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION IN THE APRIL 4 DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE BUNDESWEHR INSPECTOR GENERAL AND THE FRENCH CHIEF OF STAFF WAS THE FLEXIBILITY IN FRENCH STRATEGIC THINKING REGARDING THE NUCLEAR THRESHHOLD. THE GERMANS CONSIDERED THIS THE MOST ENCOURAGING SIGN TO DATE IN THE EVOLUTION OF FRENCH THINKING. WE WERE TOLD MERY SAID THE FRENCH INTENDED TO IMPROVE THEIR CONVENTIONAL FORCES SO THAT THERE WOULD BE NO AUTOMATICITY FOR FRANCE IN HAVING TO GO NUCLEAR. MERY STRESSED THAT THE FRENCH WISHED TO PRESERVE THEIR FLEXIBILITY IN SUCH DECISION MAKING AND THE WAY TO DO THIS WAS TO HAVE CONVENTIONAL FORCES WITH ENHANCED CAPABILITIES.

5. OUR SOURCE REPLIED IN THE NEGATIVE WHEN ASKED WHETHER PLUTON DEPLOYMENT OR ADDITIONAL FRENCH TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM THE FRG HAD BEEN DISCUSSED BY THE MINISTERS OR CHIEFS OF STAFF.

6. COMMENT: THE RECENT FRANCO-GERMAN TALKS DID NOT PRODUCE ANYTHING NEW OR DIFFERENT, BUT MERELY REPRESENTED A CONTINUATION OF THE BI-ANNUAL DEFENSE DIALOGUE. ALTHOUGH THE ATMOSPHERICS FOR THE DEFENSE MINISTER TALKS HAVE APPARENTLY IMPROVED AS LEBER AND BOURGES HAVE COME TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER BETTER, THE GERMAN SIDE NEVERTHELESS

FEELS SOMEWHAT CONSTRAINED. IN PARTICULAR, THE GERMANS MUST BE VERY CAREFUL TO AVOID GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY ARE PUSHING FRENCH MILITARY REINTEGRATION INTO THE ALLIANCE FOR FEAR THAT THE DIALOGUE WOULD BECOME STERILE. END COMMENT. STOESSEL UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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